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Soul and Spirit in Filipino Thought

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Anthropologists often speak of the Filipino belief that the soul of a person leaves the body and wanders around. If the soul is understood as the animating principle of a person, what do Filipinos really think of that animating principle? What philosophical model does it follow? What are the implications of that model? There is very little written on this topic from the viewpoint of Filipino philosophy, and as a consequence, this study suffers from its pioneering nature.

Firstly, this article gathers and synthesizes what the anthropologists and social scientists say about the Filipino concept of soul. This anthropological data will be the basis for a philosophical elaboration. Secondly, it looks at the various western and eastern philosophical models of the soul with a view choosing the model which best suits the Filipino counterpart. Thirdly, the study makes a philosophical systematization in view of the model chosen. Fourth and lastly, the article concludes with some implications.

In this article we assume the existence of Filipino identity. We may compare Filipino with ourselves. For instance, while each Tagalog is unique, he also shares what is common to his fellow Tagalogs. Filipinos therefore share a commonality in a world view in spite of the cultural variations of the ethnic minorities of the forests or the urbanized people of Makati. The linguists tell us that all Philippine languages are related. Since language reflects the world view or philosophy, we also assume the common Filipino world view as mirrored in the related languages.

ANTHROPOLOGICAL DATA

The linguistic and nonlinguistic data from Northern Luzon to Mindanao reveal the existence of more than one soul among the Filipinos. We shall only take representatives of the various Filipino

groups, for the anthropological data may be considered as variations of a single theme.

The Ibanags of Northern Luzon have a term, *ikararua* (soul), which means a companion of the body.¹ Thus in the case of shock (*makararuanan*), the soul is said to leave the body while the body remains alive. So the ritual (*mangagaggakao*) of inviting the soul to return to the body implies this conviction. The soul gives "direction and wholeness to the man" and therefore complements it.² If the rudder gives direction to a ship, so does the soul to man. The Ibanags also think that the soul has corporeal qualities. It can have color, and souls of dead babies and children are "supposed to reach full maturity or adulthood."³

To the south of the Ibanags are the Ilocanos. Jocano says that the Ilocanos have two terms for soul: *al-alia* (or *ar-ria*) and *karkarma*.⁴ The word *al-alia* may come from *al-al* ("to pant, to breathe in a labored manner").⁵ *Al-alia* can mean "ghost, specter, apparition, spirit."⁶ The *al-alia*, the companion of the body, comes to the bedside of a dying person, stays in the area after death, and even appears to relatives in dreams or through other signs to ask for prayers and forgiveness. *Ma-al-aliaen* is "to be visited by a ghost."⁷ So that the spirit may not do harm, Ilocanos offer sacrifices such as candles or food (*atang*) for nine consecutive days after burial.

The Ilocano word for the second soul is *karma* or *karkarma* ("soul, vigor, energy, strength, power, ghost, spook").⁸ It stays with the individual and leaves the body through the nose only when the person dies. During the funeral period the soul (also called *aningaas*, "a kind of ghost, specter, spook") visits those who failed to help when the deceased was sick or dying.⁹

Like the Ibanags, the Ilocanos believe that when a person is frightened, his soul (*kararua* or *karuruwa* or a constant companion) strays

1. Marino Batan, *Ibanag Indigenous Religious Beliefs* (Manila: Centro Escolar University Research and Development Center, 1981), pp. 123-24.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 124.

3. *Ibid.*

4. F. Landa Jocano, *The Ilocanos, An Ethnography of Family and Community Life in the Ilocos Region* (Quezon City: Asian Center, 1982), p. 220.

5. Morice Vanoverberg, *Iloko-English Dictionary* (Baguio: Catholic School Press, 1958), p. 7.

6. Ernesto Constantino, *Ilokano Dictionary* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1971), p. 21.

7. *Ibid.*, p.21.

8. Vanoverbergh, *Iloko-English Dictionary*, p. 136.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 19.

from the body, resulting in sickness. A medium or medicine man, through a ritual, invites the strayed soul to return to the body.

A study in an Ilocano-speaking town in Pangasinan shows also the double entities.¹⁰ The soul is called *karurua* or *kadua*. Both terms mean the double soul or twin. Other terms are *kadua ti biag* (life partner), *kakuyog* (companion), *gayyem* (friend), *kasibay* (a companion by one's side), and *taribabay* (guide). All these terms point to the concept of the soul as a double entity. The other entity is the life force which also resides in a person.

For the Kankanai-speaking areas of Northern Luzon, such as those of the Mountain Province, *ab-abiiik* means the spiritual self as distinguished from *awak*, the physical self.¹¹ But *ab-abiiik* also applies to a stone, mountain, tree, or a river which can have its *ab-abiiik*. One priest who financially supported a boy and met him after several years was introduced by his elders as "Here is your *aba-abiiik*."¹² In this usage *ab-abiiik* can also mean inspiration. We shall return to this rather vague and wide use of the term a little later.

For the Tagalogs, *kaluluwa* refers more to the soul of a deceased person and less to that of a living person. According to Jocano, the soul of a living person is his *kakambal* (twin or double). This double, "conceived as a gaseous substance" later becomes the *malay* or "the tiny voice," consciousness which is "the individual's capacity to think, to reason, to learn, and to have will power."¹³ During the night the *kakambal* may travel around. Its troublesome encounters, people say, are the cause of nightmares (*bangungut*). The double becomes only a *kaluluwa* after a person dies.

10. Erlinda Marzan-Deza, "Case Study of the Baglan: The Healer in Context," *Ang Makatao* 8 (July-Dec. 1989): 49-60.

11. Alfredo G. Pacyaya, "Religious Acculturation in Sagada," in *Religious Acculturation in the Philippines*, ed. Peter G. Gowing and William Henry Scott (Quezon City: New Day Publishers, 1971), pp. 128-39.

12. Narrated by Fr. Dominic Gaioni, an SVD anthropologist, on 24 April 1990.

13. F. Landa Jocano, "System of Classification and Diagnosis of Diseases Among the Tagalogs in Bay, Laguna, Philippines," (Quezon City: Department of Anthropology, University of the Philippines, 1971, mimeographed), pp. 42-43. In our book, *Elements of Filipino Theology*, we endorsed Postma's view that the etymology of *kaluluwa* comes from the Arabic *ruh*. It is similar to the Hebrew *ruach* which can mean "breath, wind, spirit, seat of emotion, organ of mental acts" (p. 225). Tagalog has many loan words from Arabic and Sanskrit. Manuel made a long study of the etymology of the word (see Aresenio E. Manuel, "On the Etymology of the Tagalog Word 'Kaluluwa,'" *St. Louis University Research Journal* 13 (1982): 593-607). He concludes that *kaluluwa* comes not from *ruh* but from *duha* (two or double). The prefix /ka-/ implies companionship as in *kalaro* (ka + laro = playmate), *kaklase* (ka + klase = classmate). We agree with Manuel's finding and stand corrected on the etymology.

Moving to Mindoro we encounter the Mangyans. According to the Hanunuo-Mangyans, "a living person consists of flesh (including skin, blood, hair and nails), bones (including teeth) and *karadwa*."¹⁴ The term for soul is *karadwa* (like the Ilocano term) or *kalag*. If one element is missing, the person will get sick and die. The Hanunuos have two opinions on the soul. One opinion holds that a person has only one soul (*karadwa tauo*). Another opinion says that in addition to his one soul, a person can have others in the form of animals such as dogs, birds, ice, cats, etc.¹⁵ Although the Hanunuo Mangyans do not clearly know where the soul comes from, they know that, after death, the soul goes to "the place of the dead" (*karadwahan*), where "there is no disease, no starvation, no impact from the lowlanders . . . , nor evil spirits" and no death.¹⁶

The Hanunuos also believe that the soul can separate itself from the body. For example, if a person is frightened, his soul will leave the body and therefore, he will get sick.¹⁷ Hence the Hanunuos perform a rite in order to call the soul back to the body and to restore health. Since the soul is afraid of evil spirits, it can change itself into a swift animal and thereby outrun the spirits. When a person dreams, the *karadwa* strolls around. The matter of the dream is the subject of the strolling.¹⁸

The Hanunuo term *kalag* is also the Cebuano Visayan term for soul. If the Tagalogs hold that the *kakambal* acts as "guardian angel," the same view is manifested in Cebuano Visayan as in the expression, "maghilak ang imong kalag" (your soul/double/guardian angel will weep). *Kalag* in Cebuano connotes the soul after death. When a man is alive, the better term for the double is *kaluha*. According to Salazar, this double "is the essence of his intellectual and moral powers and, at death, becomes an *anito* or spirit."¹⁹

In addition to *kalag*, the other entity is the life force called *ginhawa*, a word rich with varied meanings. It is the old Cebuano Visayan word for life.²⁰ In modern Cebuano *ginhawa* means stomach, pit of

14. Masaru Miyamoto, *The Hanunuo-Mangyan: Society, Religion and Law among a Mountain People of Mindoro Island, Philippines* (Tokyo: National Museum of Ethnology, 1988), p. 74.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 73.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 84.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 73.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 74.

19. Zeus A. Salazar, ed., "Ethnic Psychology and History: The Study of Faith Healing in the Philippines," in *The Ethnic Dimension, Papers on Philippine Culture, History and Psychology* (Cologne: Counseling Center for Filipinos, 1983), p. 99.

20. Tomas V. Hermosisima, *Bisayan-English-Tagalog Dictionary* (Manila: Pedro B. Ayuda & Co., 1966), p. 193.

the stomach, breath, lungs, vital spirit, intestines (*ginhawaan*). By extension, *ginhawa* can also mean food (especially a cookie), appetite, disposition (good or bad), character, condition.²¹

This brief survey reveals a pattern which revolves around variations of the same theme. This pattern can thus predict the phenomenology of the soul among other Philippine groups.²²

From this pattern of the Filipino thinking on soul, we see little difference between the thinking of the upland ethnic minority groups and the lowland Filipinos. Some of the present day ethnic minorities are like living fossils in the sense that seeing them is to see the precolonial Filipinos as described in the first contact in Blair and Robertson.²³ Their similarity can apply in other areas as well. For instance, the legal philosophy of the precolonial Filipinos, the ethnic minorities and the lowland Filipinos is quite similar—if not almost identical.²⁴

Some writers have classified the so-called Christian lowland Filipinos as if they were a species distinct from their "pagan" ethnic minority brothers,²⁵ which they seem not to be in many areas. The alleged contrast may be compared to that between urban and rural Filipinos. People in Makati buy their food from the supermarkets, while rural people in an agricultural barrio raise their own food. But we also find not a few people in Metro Manila who work in offices, but may also have a vegetable garden and raise a few pigs and chickens. The study of Mendez-Jocano has shown that the residents of a housing project in Quezon City retain many of the values and attitudes of the barrios.²⁶ Not a few barangays in Metro Manila celebrate their district fiestas in May as if they were in the rural areas.

If there is a continuum in the social context of the urban and rural Filipino, there is also a continuum in their world view. This contin-

21. John U. Wolff, *A Dictionary of Cebuano Visayan*, special monograph issue of *Philippine Journal of Linguistics* (June 1972): 266; Salazar, "Ethnic Psychology and History," pp. 99-100.

22. See, for instance, the work of Marcelino N. Maceda, *The Culture of the Mamanua As Compared with that of the other Negritos of Southeast Asia* (Cebu: San Carlos Publications, 1964), p. 105.

23. Besides the data from Blair and Robertson, Demetrio collated other data concerning the soul and the dead. See Francisco R. Demetrio, *Myths and Symbols Philippines*, rev. ed. (Manila: National Book Store, Inc., 1990).

24. Leonardo N. Mercado, *Legal Philosophy: Eastern, Western, and Filipino* (Tacloban: Divine Word University Publications, 1979).

25. See the comments of Salazar, "Ethnic Psychology and History" pp. 95-96.

26. Paz Policarpio Mendez and F. Landa Jocano, *The Filipino Family in its Rural and Urban Orientation: Two Case Studies in Culture and Education* (Manila: Centro Escolar University Research and Development Center, 1974), pp. 386-87.

uum may range from the thoroughly western to the precolonial, but in this continuum, it is my contention that all Filipinos share basically the same core values and the way of thinking.

Since language is like a record of the collective experience of its speakers, the various expressions mentioned above illustrate the common Filipino experience of the soul, with the exception of some westernized Filipinos, who are estranged from their culture, who may not share what has been described above.

What can we conclude from the foregoing? The anthropological data show that the Filipino believes that his soul can wander while he is alive. Salazar thinks this view is not only pan-Philippine but extends even to neighboring countries.²⁷ Most Filipinos believe that the double soul can temporarily go outside a person. However, a long separation can be harmful to his health. A less explicit fact is that since man can live even if the double is outside the body, he has another entity which leaves the body only after death. Although the anthropological data reveal the belief of having a soul and another vital principle (explicit or implicit in varying degrees), the overall picture comes to this conclusion.

The double (which is common to Philippine ethnic groups) is a person's essence of his intellectual and moral powers. After death it becomes the ghost (*kaluluwa*, *kalag*, etc.). The other vital principle is explicit in Ilocano and Cebuano, and implicit in other groups. The double is "generally located in the head" whereas "the *ginhawa* has its seat somewhere in the intestinal region, often in the liver or *atay*."²⁸

The importance of the abdominal region is confirmed by the following phenomena. Minor or nonvital wounds are considered "far from the intestines" (*layo sa tinai/malayo sa bituka/adayo ti bagis*). Folk beliefs concerning the *aswang* or witch and its interest in the intestines abound. The modern Filipino psychic healers also concentrate their treatment on the abdominal area.²⁹ That Filipinos associate food with health is seen in rituals which always have food offerings. Likewise when Filipinos visit the sick, they always take along food as a gift to the sick. Salazar thinks that this practice is very un-western.³⁰ Visayans hold that the liver is the "seat of emotions."³¹ Hence we find expressions related to the liver, such as *makapakitbi/*

27. Zeus A. Salazar, "Ang Kamalayan at Kaluluwa: Isang Paglilinaw ng Ilang Konsepto sa Kinagisnang Sikolohiya," in *Ulat ng Ikalawang Pambansang Kumperensya ng Sikolohiyang Pilipino* (Quezon City: Pambansang Samahan sa Sikolohiyang Pilipino, 1977), pp. 131-44.

28. Salazar, "Ethnic Psychology and History," p. 99.

29. *Ibid.*, pp. 100-101.

30. Salazar, "Kamalayan at Kaluluwa . . .," p. 136.

31. Wolff, *Dictionary of Cebuano Visayan*, p. 63.

makapakulo sa atay (literally, makes the liver curdle, makes the blood curdle), *lapad ang atay* (literally, expanded liver, or to be flattered), *makapadako sa atay* (literally, enlarges the liver, or make something go to one's head).

In his study of primitive religions, Reviere gives examples of groups which have more than two souls. But he generalizes to the common belief in the existence of two souls, an internal soul and an external soul.³² The internal soul "is designated by the place where it shows its power; it is in the whole body that we find the substance of the soul."³³ On the other hand, the external soul, "located outside the body, can leave the body during a dream or sometimes two or three years before physical death. . . ."³⁴

A SURVEY OF PHILOSOPHICAL MODELS

Our next task is to set the anthropological data in a philosophical context. But before doing that, first let us outline some possible philosophical models. For models help us articulate and give insights to phenomena. Models are like "concrete puzzle solutions" of problems. Theoretical models may either be picture or scale models and disclosure models. "A disclosure model stands between a picture and a formula; it is a model which deals in hints rather than identities."³⁵ The disclosure model helps in giving a theory to a phenomena under study, implies phenomena, becomes a proxy of the phenomena, and "enable us to talk of what formerly eluded us."³⁶

We shall survey Western and Eastern models of the soul to discover what model best suits the anthropological data on the Filipino animating principle. Since modern travel and cultural borrowings have blurred the concepts of East and West, we take the words, not in their geographical meaning, but in their psychological connotation.³⁷

If we survey Western philosophy, we find hardly any model of two souls. Western philosophers give more attention to the dualism between the body and the soul. A quick review of Western philosophy substantiates this point. Plato held that man is essentially a soul

32. Claude Reviere, "Concepts in Primitive Religion," *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, 13: 426-31.

33. *Ibid.*, p. 428.

34. *Ibid.*

35. Florencio L. Lagura, *Models for the Body-Mind Problem in Merleau-Ponty* (Tagaytay City: Divine Word Seminary, 1984), p. 30.

36. *Ibid.*, p. 32.

37. See Aloysius Pieris, *Love Meets Wisdom, A Christian Experience of Buddhism* (Quezon City: Claretian Publications, 1989), pp. 8-42.

which is imprisoned in a body.³⁸ Aristotle, who did not agree with his teacher, Plato, put the soul in his hylomorphic classification. He said that the soul is the form or actuation of the body. Thomas Aquinas took over the Aristotelian system of unity of body and soul. Since then it has become the standard scholastic doctrine. However, Descartes disturbed this classic doctrine. He made the dualism greater when he said that mind (read: soul) is essentially thinking (*res cogitans*) and the body is essentially extension (*res extensa*). Succeeding philosophers tried to reorganize Pandora's box which Descartes had opened. Merleau-Ponty and the other existentialists did not stress this dualism.

EASTERN PHILOSOPHICAL MODELS

The first compatible model for the Filipino soul is in Chinese philosophy. As early as 535 B.C., a learned Chinese statesman, Tzu-ch'an, had said that man has two souls, the *p'o* and the *hun*.³⁹ Later thinkers concurred with this philosophy. What is the difference between these two souls? In terms of priority of existence, the *p'o* comes into existence with the beginning of human life. The *hun* comes later.⁴⁰ This physical nature of the *p'o* is expressed in bodily strength and movement. On the other hand, *hun* refers to a person's vital force and is expressed in consciousness and intelligence. After death the *p'o* returns to earth, while the *hun* goes to heaven. In case of violent death (such as in accidents, murder etc.) both may stay in the world "and perform evil and malicious acts."⁴¹

This philosophy of the soul roots itself in the *yin* and *yang* principles, the Taoist doctrine that pervades everything in the universe. Everything has a *yin* and *yang* principle, just as a battery has its positive and negative poles. These two poles generate energy when harnessed. But each *yin* has a *yang* principle in itself, just as the *yang* has a *yin* principle in itself. We can see this sub-yinyang system depicted as two dots in the yinyang symbol. This subsystem means Chinese philosophy is not a dichotomy of the *yin* and *yang* prin-

38. Whatever interpretation be given to Plato, the discussion still centers about the relationship between two components: the body and soul. The influence of Platonism and of Neo-Platonism in Christian spirituality led to hatred of the material, such as the body and the world.

39. Wing-tsit Chan (trans. and comp.), *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1963), pp. 11-13.

40. Tu Wei-Ming, "Chinese Concepts," *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, 13: 447.

41. *Ibid.*, p. 447.

ciples, such as between matter and spirit, between body and soul, between male and female, between creator and creature, etc.

The *ch'i* (or *ki* in Japanese), which is translated as vital force, material force links the yin and yang principles. *Ch'i* "penetrates every dimension of existence and functions as the constitutive element for each modality of being."⁴²

Both yin and yang principles expand and contract in their interaction. *P'o* is related to the contraction of yin. *P'o* is also related to *kuei*, the negative spiritual force. Hence *p'o* is the negative spirit. On the other hand, *hun* is related to the expansion of the yang. *Hun* is also related to *shen*, the positive spiritual force. *Hun* then is the positive spirit. Both *p'o* and *hun* "require nourishment of the essences of vital forces of the cosmos to stay healthy."⁴³

As noted above, Chinese philosophy does not dichotomize the material and the spiritual. Instead it believes in the continuum from a stone, to a blade of grass, a horse, a human being, and heaven. The *ch'i* or vital force links the members of the continuum. One can look at the continuum either from the material or spiritual perspective.

Precious stones, such as jade; rare trees, such as pines more than a thousand years old; unusual animals, such as the phoenix, the unicorn, and the dragon are, in a sense, spiritual beings. There is no matter devoid of spirituality. Human beings, spiritual beings, and Heaven are, in a sense, material. Totally disembodied spirit is also difficult to envision.⁴⁴

Soul, in the Western sense, is usually translated in Chinese by two words, *ling-hun*. *Ling* means a spiritual force or spirit. In Chinese thinking, soul "can perhaps be understood as a refined vital force that mediates between the human world and the spiritual realm."⁴⁵ Likewise man is a "co-creator" or forms a trinity with Heaven and Earth. He is called to harmonize both sides. The Chinese believe in good and evil spirits. People "benefit from the positive aspects of the soul, for through the 'soul force' they are in touch with the dead and with the highest spiritual realm, Heaven."⁴⁶

Zen Buddhism, like Chinese philosophy, also holds that man is composed of a body, a soul, and a spirit. Body is translated as *shin* whereas soul is translated in a different ideogram but pronounced as *shin*, meaning heart, mind, or both. It is the place of the intellect,

42. Ibid.

43. Ibid.

44. Ibid., p. 448.

45. Ibid.

46. Ibid., p. 449.

imagination, feelings, memory, greed, anger, ignorance. Spirit, on the other hand, is *sho*, and is translated variably as Nature, Essentially Nature, True Self, Empty-Infinite, Buddha Nature.⁴⁷

Like Chinese philosophy, Indian philosophy holds the continuum from matter to spirit. Man is an example of that continuum. He has a physical body, an astral body, *prana* or vital force, instinctive mind, spiritual mind, and spirit. According to the Upanishads, the human being is composed of seven sheaths. The outermost sheath is the body (*stihula-sarira*, 'gross body'), the visible, perishable and crudest part of man. Next to the body is the astral body or the etheric double (*suksma-sarira*, 'subtle body').⁴⁸ A person can project his astral body to another place, as in a desire to get help. This astral body after death becomes the ghost. Third is the *prana* or vital force. Some healers use this vital force. (Pranic healing is becoming popular in the Philippines.)

The next four sheaths are collectively known as the mental principles: the instinctive mind, the intellect, the spiritual mind, and the spirit. The instinctive mind "controls our automatic responses" such as "appetites, desires, passions, sensations and emotions of the lower order."⁴⁹ The intellect is the "faculty which differentiates man from animals."⁵⁰ The spiritual mind, on the other had, "is the faculty that enables us to see the truth of something beyond the understanding of the intellect or reason alone."⁵¹ Finally the spirit or *atman* (self) is an "independent, imperishable entity, underlying the conscious personality and bodily frame" and which "is forever changeless, beyond time, beyond space and the veiling net of causality, beyond measure, beyond the dominion of the eye."⁵²

Atman is not the soul as in Western psychology or philosophy. For instance, scholastic philosophy speaks of the intellect and will as faculties of the soul. But in Indian thought, the mind or intellect is one of the sheaths, an outer self. It is not part of the *atman* which is the real self, the ultimate subject which has nothing to do with the object.

47. Elaine MacInnes, "What is Oriental Spiritually?" in *Asia's Gift to a Total Christian Spirituality* (Manila: Socio-Pastoral Institute, 1988), p. 3.

48. Heinrich Zimmer, *Philosophies of India*, ed. Joseph Campbell (Cleveland: The World Publishing Co., 1956), p. 79.

49. Jaime T. Licauco, *Understanding the Psychic Powers of Man*, rev. ed. (Manila: National Book Store, Inc., 1978), p. 15.

50. *Ibid.*

51. *Ibid.*

52. Zimmer, *Philosophies of India*, p. 3.

According to the *Vedantasara* of the fifteenth century, the atman is hidden within five sheaths or psychosomatic layers: the *anna-maya-kosa*, the gross body, the sheath of the prana or vital forces (*prana-maya-kosa*), the sheath of the mind and senses (*mano-maya-kosa*), the sheath of understanding (*vij-nana*) and the sheath made of bliss (*an-anda*).⁵³

Whether there are five or seven sheaths is not for us to decide here. What is clear is that the Indian thinking of the astral body or etheric double and spirit is similar to the previous models of two entities.

Since the Bible was written from the viewpoint of a Semitic or Near-East culture, we can include it as another example of an Eastern model. The Old Testament was originally written in Hebrew. Although the latter parts of the Bible, such as the New Testament, were written in Greek, these latter writings in Greek still reflect the Semitic mind.

The Bible renders the body as *bashar* (Hebrew) or as *sarx* (Greek). The better English translation is "flesh," not "body." The Bible has two concepts which in English are soul and spirit. Soul is the translation for *nephesh* (Hebrew) or *psyche* (Greek) while spirit is the translation for *ruach* (Hebrew) or *pneuma* (Greek). Let us look at each concept in turn.

Flesh does not only mean the physical substance. It is the whole man including the soul and spirit. This wholeness extends to its being related to others as in kinship. Flesh also stands "in opposition to God" in the sense that man belongs to a "passing evil age."⁵⁴ Soul (*nephesh*), originally meaning throat or neck, means human life, the animating principle of human nature (especially of personality). Any live activity (physical, psychical or psychophysical) is *nephesh*. It stays with the body as long as it is recognizable. According to McKenzie, "perhaps the Ego of modern psychology comes closer to a parallel" with *nephesh* and that the same Hebrew word is the nearest word for "person in the psychological sense, i.e., a conscious subject."⁵⁵

Spirit, on the other hand, means breath (especially the breath of life), the disposition of an individual, a person's habitual attitudes, as man's supernatural power which comes from God.

53. *Ibid.*, p. 415.

54. Wulstan Mork, *The Biblical Meaning of Man* (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Co., 1967), p. 32.

55. John McKenzie, *Dictionary of the Bible* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1965), pp. 837-38.

What is the relationship between these concepts? Both soul and spirit mean life. But there is a difference. Soul (*nephesh-psyche*) stands for natural man, while spirit (*ruach-pneuma*) is the ethical factor which adds the new dimension of relationship with God. Spirit enables man to serve God and to participate in the supernatural order.

The Hebrew concept of man is holistic. Man is not a trichotomy of flesh, soul, and spirit but one totality. "If the Greeks dichotomized matter from spirit, the Hebrew counterpart is not matter versus spirit but the natural versus the supernatural."⁵⁶

An analogy may illustrate the distinction. A duck is swim-oriented. But one can raise a duck without allowing it to swim. The result is an unfilled or frustrated duck. It will always yearn for water as its fulfillment. Allowing the duck to swim is like giving the spirit to a man. The spirit is the ground or point of union between God and man.⁵⁷

Scholastic philosophy, and all Western philosophers who have been inspired by Greek thinking, divide man into body and soul. The biblical counterpart of the dichotomy is flesh-soul versus spirit.⁵⁸ Sartre and his followers have ignored this divine orientation in man. For Sartre, man is a "useless passion." This was also the core of Renaissance model of man—"divorced from God for all practical purposes, but very much alive in the here and now."⁵⁹

From the survey of Eastern models emerges one thing in common: that man is the totality of body, soul, and spirit. The Eastern all differ from the Western dichotomy of body and soul. Although man has a soul and body, only one of the two will survive in the after life. However, the various eastern philosophies are not the same in the finer points. Both the Chinese and Indian models show a continuum from matter to spirit.

With this as a background, then, let us return to Filipino philosophy.

FILIPINO PHILOSOPHY OF SOUL AND SPIRIT

Anthropological and linguistic data contain an implied philosophy. For instance, *buot/loob/nakem* already has quite a bibliography of philosophical literature around it. Numerous scholarly works have

56. Mork, *Biblical Meaning*, p. 127.

57. *Ibid.*, p. 108.

58. *Ibid.*, p. 127.

59. *Ibid.*

been written on loob. The same can be said of both soul and spirit. Soul in Western philosophy is obviously spirit in Filipino and oriental philosophy. But since Western philosophy in general does not distinguish soul from spirit, the nuances between the two suffer.

We said earlier that while most Philippine groups have terms for soul, spirit is mostly implied. Our study has explicitated the implicit in Filipino thought regarding this topic. Ilocano has two terms: *al-alia* and *karkarma*, whereas Cebuano has *kalag* (or *kaluha*) and *ginhawa*.

There is no problem in the terms for soul. The (astral) double of a living person should not be confused with ghost. In Cebuano, for instance, *kalag* connotes the ghost of a dead person, which is his *kaluha* while he is alive. The other Philippine languages have their corresponding terms for soul as mentioned earlier.

What term shall we use for the spirit? The problem is that not all Philippine languages have terms for the spirit as different from soul. We have two courses of action: to use a loan word (*espírito*, which is recognizable and common to most Philippine languages) or to take an undeveloped indigenous term. Since language is the carrier of culture, we should prefer indigenous terms. When scholars gave loob its philosophical refinement, loob became accepted in scientific circles and later became popularized. The same can happen to the indigenous term for spirit.

We propose that the traditional terms for spirit be kept. For spirit, we suggest *ginhawa* for Cebuano Visayan, *hininga* for Tagalog, and *anges* for Ilocano. Since the Ilocano term *karkarma* also connotes ghost, *anges* is a better word to designate the spirit. The other Philippine languages can take their counterparts for spirit as breath.

There are several reasons for our choice of *ginhawa/hininga/anges/* (to be referred henceforth as *ginhawa* for the sake of brevity) as spirit. Firstly, *ginhawa* is synonymous with life itself. When the *ginhawa* is cut, so is life. On the other hand *kalag* or *kaluluwa* can go on astral travel but *ginhawa* always stays with the person. Only death separates the *ginhawa*. Secondly, since the *ginhawa* is centered in the abdominal area, this clue links Filipino thought to Indian and Chinese philosophy, which also consider the navel as the center of the body and of vital energy (*prana*, *chi*, *ki*). Thirdly, *ginhawa* shows the holistic concept of man. *Ginhawa* is as holistic as *buot/loob/nakem*.⁶⁰ The Filipino, while alive, does not dichotomize his body from

60. Mercado, *Elements of Filipino Philosophy*, pp. 53-67.

his spirit, although he may say that his kalag goes somewhere when he dreams. The Filipino holistic concept of himself is close to the existentialist counterpart. Finally, ginhawa is similar to the Hebrew or biblical meaning of *ruach* or spirit. As we have explained above, *ruach* is not only breath (especially the breath of life) but also a person's disposition and habitual attitudes.

The soul (*kaluha/kaluluwa/kararuwa*) refers to the astral body in other oriental philosophies. We have pointed out that the entity, which may go outside the body, is different from spirit which is the principle of life. What is the relationship between the two?

In addition to the survey of oriental models mentioned above, we may include the Tsou tribe of Taiwan. This group of people is anthropologically related to the Filipinos of the Mountain Province. Their physical features, houses, artifacts, and language reveal this link. The Tsou tribe also distinguishes the soul (*nsou*) from the spirit (*hizo*). A virtuous man is one whose soul and spirit are in good communication, whereas an evil man has both in conflict.⁶¹ Likewise in biblical anthropology, the spirit gives the ethical dimension in man.

The same can be said of the Filipino. Since harmony is the essence of Filipino philosophy, the ethical man is one whose body, soul, and spirit are in harmony. An evil man's spirit is not in tune with his body and soul. The idea of integral harmony is seen in the concept of *pagbabalikloob* (conversion), which literally means returning to the original goodness of one's *kalooban*. The philosophy of the spirit is therefore related to the philosophy of loob.

The philosophy of ginhawa implies the Filipino's orientation to the Other World. While he is alive, he has an orientation or hunger to be united with the Absolute. This yearning is seen, for instance, among the Tirurais of Mindanao.⁶² Their main ambition in life is to ascend to heaven in their human body by finding a path to heaven in the mountains. This orientation to the absolute, however does not mean the Filipino dichotomizes the visible and the invisible world.⁶³ The Filipino takes it for a fact that he does not entirely die. He believes that when he dies, his spirit continues in the Other World.

The Filipino, like other orientals, speaks of truth as either false or true propositions. His equivalent of either/or is both/and. Likewise,

61. Barnabas Kao, "Dialogue: The Tsou Tribe, The Taiwanese Experience," in *Mission and Dialogue, Theory and Practice*, ed. Leonardo N. Mercado and James J. Knight (Manila: Divine Word Publications, 1989), p. 42.

62. Clemens Wein, ed., *Berinareu, The Religious Epic of the Tirurais* (Manila: Divine Word Publications, 1989).

63. Mercado, *Elements of Filipino Theology*, chapter 2 ("The Incarnational World View").

beings are not just either spirit or matter. The typical Filipino sees a continuum from matter to spirit. He takes for granted the existence of the departed souls, the evil and good spirits of nature.

The Filipino philosophy of soul and spirit belongs to world view of his primal religion. All material things can be seen as having life, and all spiritual things can be seen as having material dimensions. The rural Filipino may consider the river and a stone as alive. The Kankanai concept of *ab-abiiik* attests to this conviction. Likewise a spirit can be described as having physical traits. For example the Ibanags think that souls are pale.⁶⁴

Is this world view the same as that which psychologist Jaime Bulatao calls a "transpersonal world view"?⁶⁵ This *weltanschauung* holds that reality is more than just matter, because there are other spirits. It unconsciously holds a bigger, cosmic collectivity. This transpersonal world view is the opposite of the materialistic, man-centered world view which owes its origin to Newton. For Newton, the reality is contained in a quantifiable world. Such a view has no place for the spiritual. Fortunately, this physical model has given way to Einstein and quantum physics where the spiritual has its place once again. Is the transpersonal world view not similar to what Felix Wilfred calls the "Asian theological epistemology"?⁶⁶ It is in contrast to "technological epistemology" which has brought about the loss of the sense of mystery, has impersonalized society, and has fostered authoritarianism.

CONCLUSION

This study has touched many points. Soul and spirit can be seen from different perspectives: psychology, philosophy, theology, and other behavioral sciences. It has shown that Filipino thought on the matter of soul-spirit is quite oriental. This does not mean that Filipino philosophy is exactly the same as other oriental philosophies, for there are points of difference as well as of similarity. Secondly,

64. Batan, *Ibanag Indigenous Religious Beliefs*, p. 124.

65. Jaime Bulatao, "Filipino World View" (Paper delivered at the seminar on "Philippine World View," University of the Philippines, 29 May-2 June 1978). See also "The New Mysticism in the Philippine Church," *Life Today* (November, 1982): 14-20; "Is the Sky Blue? Reflections on the Experience of God Among Philippine Folk Catholics" (Paper given at the New ERA Conference, Doroda Beach, Puerto Rico, 30 Dec. 1983 to 4 January 1984).

66. Felix Wilfred, "Dialogue Gasping for Breath? Towards New Frontiers in Inter-religious Dialogue," *FABC Papers*, no. 49, pp. 32-52.

Filipino philosophy teaches us not to dichotomize matter and spirit, body and soul. This dichotomy has wrought psychological damage even in Western man. It can lead to angelism, which detests the body and stresses the soul. Here Jungian psychology is much at home in bridging the unconscious and the spirit.⁶⁷ Many Filipino intellectuals fall victim to this Western dichotomy. Finally, psychologists will find the distinction between soul and body a very useful one to discover more of Filipino psychology in the actuations of the psychic healers and the traditional *arbularyo*.

67. See Josef Goldbrunner, *Individuation* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1964).